

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 508
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE S508-PCS45374-BE-8

Short Title: LL to CPL/Apprenticeship Program.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 26, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PROVIDE A PATHWAY TO A CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL LICENSE
FOR TEACHERS TEACHING UNDER A LIMITED LICENSE, TO ESTABLISH THE
TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, TO REPURPOSE FUNDS FROM THE
TEACHER APPRENTICE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE TEACHER
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, AND TO REQUIRE THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AND THE STATE BOARD OF
COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO DEVELOP AN EXPEDITED TEACHER PIPELINE
PATHWAY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**PART I. CONVERTING A LIMITED LICENSE TO A CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
LICENSE**

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-270.15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-270.15. Examination requirements.

...

(e) Conversion to Continuing Professional License. – The Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, the State Board shall not convert an IPL or RL-IPL, RL, or limited license to a continuing professional license for a teacher who has not fulfilled the examination requirements of this section.

(f) Waiver of Examination Requirements for Certain Individuals with Limited Licenses. – The State Board shall convert a limited license to a continuing professional license for a teacher who has available growth data under the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) and has a positive growth score for two of the three most recent years for which growth scores are available."

PART II. TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

SECTION 2.(a) Article 17D of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-269.33. Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions shall apply in this section:

(1) Advanced Teaching Roles unit. – As defined in G.S. 115C-310.3(6).

(2) Apprentice. – A person who is employed as an apprentice by an apprenticeship employer and meets all of the following criteria:

a. Holds a bachelor's degree.

b. Is eligible to hold or holds one of the following:



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1. An emergency license.
 2. A residency license.
 3. A permit to teach issued by the Department in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Education.
- c. Submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- (3) Apprenticeship employer. – An Advanced Teaching Roles unit that meets all of the following criteria:
- a. Has a registered apprenticeship program under requirements established by the United States Department of Labor.
 - b. Employs apprentices under the Program.
- (4) Department. – The Department of Public Instruction.
- (5) Program. – The Teacher Apprenticeship Program.
- (6) RFP. – Request for proposals.
- (b) Program Established; Purpose. – There is established the Teacher Apprenticeship Program as a competitive grant program for the purpose of increasing the number of professionally licensed teachers in the State and improving teacher competency, student outcomes, and teacher retention in the State. The Department of Public Instruction shall administer the Program in collaboration with ApprenticeshipNC as set forth in this section.
- (c) Request for Proposals. – No later than November 1 of each year, ApprenticeshipNC shall issue an RFP for the Program. Advanced Teaching Roles units may submit proposals by January 1 of the following calendar year. Proposals shall include at least the following information:
- (1) A plan to establish a registered teacher apprenticeship program in collaboration with ApprenticeshipNC, including at least the following information:
 - a. The number of apprentices the unit intends to employ using grant funds for State-funded salary supplements, State-funded enrollment expenses, or both.
 - b. Specific subject areas and grade levels in the local school administrative unit with teacher shortages.
 - (2) A system of supports that would be provided for apprentices, including qualifications of mentor teachers and a schedule of supervision.
 - (3) Alternative sources of funding to support apprenticeships that could be paired with State funds received under the Program, including federal workforce development funds.
 - (4) An explanation of how the unit would incorporate its registered teacher apprenticeship program with its advanced teaching roles program to enhance the learning environment for apprentices.
 - (5) Strategies to encourage candidates to accept an apprenticeship instead of directly entering the teacher profession on a Residency License, Emergency License, or permit to teach.
- (d) Selection of Recipients. – By March 15 of each school year in which proposals are submitted, ApprenticeshipNC shall review the proposals and select local school administrative units to participate in the Program, beginning in the subsequent school year. ApprenticeshipNC shall notify the Department of its selections, and the Department shall allocate funds to the selected Advanced Teaching Roles units in accordance with subsection (e) of this section.
- (e) Allocation of State Grant Funds. – To the extent funds are appropriated by the General Assembly for this purpose, the Department shall allocate the funds for grants to apprenticeship employers based on the number of apprentices the unit intends to employ receiving grant funds for State-funded salary supplements, State-funded enrollment expenses, or both, up to a maximum of 10 total apprentices per unit, as follows:

- (1) Up to seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per apprentice per year, plus any additional funds necessary for benefits, to provide salary supplements for apprentices in accordance subdivision (3) of subsection (f) of this section.
- (2) Up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per apprentice per year for the costs of enrollment of an apprentice in an institution of higher education in accordance with subdivision (5) of subsection (f) of this section.
- (f) Program Requirements. – The following minimum requirements shall apply to apprentices and apprenticeship employers under the Program:
- (1) Number of apprentices. – An apprenticeship employer shall employ no more than a maximum of 10 total apprentices who receive grant funds for State-funded salary supplements, State-funded enrollment expenses, or both. An apprenticeship employer may employ additional apprentices receiving funds for salary supplements or education expenses from other sources.
- (2) Funds for positions. – An apprenticeship employer may employ apprentices using State funds allotted for teacher assistant positions, with roles and responsibilities modified to meet the requirements of the Program, or other available funds.
- (3) Salary supplements. – As follows:
- a. An apprenticeship employer shall provide the following salary supplements:
1. For each apprentice, up to a maximum of seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per apprentice.
2. For each mentor teacher, up to a maximum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per mentor teacher.
- b. An apprenticeship employer may provide a salary supplement for any other teacher employed by the local school administrative unit who agrees to become the teacher of record for additional students to facilitate the operation of the registered apprenticeship program in that unit, up to a maximum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000).
- (4) Mentors. – Each apprentice shall work full time in a classroom with a mentor teacher who is a member of a team of teachers that is led by a teacher with an advanced teaching role. For purposes of this subdivision, a mentor teacher may include a classroom excellence teacher as defined in G.S. 115C-310.3(7).
- (5) Enrollment costs. – An apprentice shall enroll in or remain enrolled in a recognized educator preparation program. An apprenticeship employer may provide up to a maximum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per apprentice per year for the costs of enrollment in an institution of higher education. These funds shall only be used after the apprentice has exhausted all other scholarships or grants covering the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education, including federal Pell grants.
- (6) Limitations. – An apprentice shall not do any of the following:
- a. Serve as the teacher of record for any students.
- b. Engage in substitute teaching for more than eight hours per week.
- c. Work as an apprentice for more than three years.
- (g) Term. – The Department shall award grant funds to selected Advanced Teaching Roles units to serve as apprenticeship employers for one or more terms of three years. Prior to the conclusion of a term, ApprenticeshipNC shall evaluate the success of the Program at the unit and the compliance of the unit with the requirements of this section. At the conclusion of the evaluation, ApprenticeshipNC may, in its discretion, renew the apprenticeship employer for an additional term. Throughout the Program, an apprenticeship employer shall provide any

information or access requested by ApprenticeshipNC to evaluate the registered apprenticeship program pursuant to this section.

(h) Emergency Position Conversion. – Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-105.25(b), an apprenticeship employer may convert one position allocated to the unit for classroom teachers to its dollar equivalent at the salary on the first step of the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule for every one apprentice employed by the unit who is receiving State grant funds if all of the following are met:

- (1) The apprentice receiving State grant funds would have been eligible to fill the vacant position using a residency license, emergency license, or permit to teach but was instead hired into the apprentice position.
- (2) The funds are only used for one or more of the following purposes in accordance with the requirements of the Program:
 - a. Salary supplements for apprentices.
 - b. Salary supplements for mentor teachers.
 - c. Costs of enrollment in an institution of higher education.
 - d. Salary supplements for teachers identified in sub-subdivision b. of subdivision (3) of subsection (f) of this section.

(i) Administration. – Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction for the Program for each fiscal year, the Department shall allocate the greater of fifteen percent (15%) or three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) to ApprenticeshipNC to do all of the following in consultation with the Department:

- (1) Outline the duties and responsibilities of apprentices, including on-the-job training requirements.
- (2) Collaborate with recognized educator preparation programs to establish education requirements for apprentices and revise curriculum requirements for student teaching to include apprenticeships under the Program.
- (3) Create minimum competencies for apprentices that reflect the progressive acquisition of ability.
- (4) Create resources that can be used by apprenticeship employers to select and train mentor teachers, including the responsibilities of a mentor teacher and background information on teacher apprenticeship programs.
- (5) Develop a process to monitor apprentices in their first years of teaching after successful completion of the Program to evaluate the qualities of teacher candidates that correlate to successful outcomes and lower teacher turnover rates.
- (6) Assist apprenticeship employers with the following:
 - a. Combining State and federal funds to maximize the number of apprentices in the Program.
 - b. Complying with applicable State and federal law.
- (7) Develop a training module for mentor teachers that establishes standards for mentor teachers under the Program and incorporates, where applicable, any preexisting standards for mentor teachers.

(j) Report. – No later than March 15 of each year, ApprenticeshipNC shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the Program, including at least the following information:

- (1) The impact of the Program for each apprenticeship employer on the following:
 - a. The number of teachers, disaggregated by licensure type.
 - b. Student outcomes.
 - c. Teacher retention.
- (2) Successful strategies and best practices used by apprenticeship employers.
- (3) Any barriers to expanding the Program."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 115C-269.32 is repealed.

SECTION 2.(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or a provision of the Committee Report described in Section 43.2 of S.L. 2023-134 to the contrary, of the one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in recurring funds allocated for the Teacher Apprentice Grant Program pursuant to G.S. 115C-269.32, beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, these funds shall instead be used for the Teacher Apprenticeship Program established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 2.(d) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025. ApprenticeshipNC shall issue the initial request for proposals pursuant to G.S. 115C-269.33, as enacted by subsection (a) of this section, by November 1, 2025, for applications from local school administrative units to establish registered teacher apprenticeship programs beginning in the 2026-2027 school year. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-269.33(j), as enacted by subsection (a) of this section, ApprenticeshipNC shall provide its initial report on the impact of the Teacher Apprenticeship Program by March 15, 2027.

PART III. EXPEDITED TEACHER PIPELINE PATHWAY STUDY

SECTION 3. No later than February 15, 2026, the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, in collaboration with the State Board of Community Colleges, shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on a plan for an expedited pathway for North Carolina high school students to enter the teaching profession. The plan shall include at least the following components:

- (1) Options for an accelerated transition pathway that allows high school students to earn college credits leading to a teaching license while participating in structured, paid, or other experiential learning in the classroom, including applicable program design and sequencing components needed to achieve that goal.
- (2) Maximize usage and transferability of at least the following coursework completion opportunities:
 - a. College transfer pathways provided through the Career and College Promise Program that support entry into a recognized educator preparation program.
 - b. Community college coursework leading to completion of an associate degree related to teacher preparation.
 - c. Online or asynchronous coursework provided at a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina leading to a bachelor's degree.
 - d. Enrollment in an associate degree program or a bachelor's degree program while serving (i) as a full-time employee in a public school unit and (ii) as a teacher assistant or apprentice in a registered apprenticeship program pursuant to G.S. 115C-269.33, as enacted by Section 2(a) of this act.
- (3) Any legislative changes or appropriations needed to implement the plan.

PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 4. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law. Section 1 of this act applies to limited licenses expiring on or after that date.